

## HORNE ANNOUNCES A SECOND CHANCE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

### “State School Chief Tom Horne Endorses Further Investigation of Healthy School Environments in Secondary Schools”

PHOENIX – Tom Horne, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, supports a healthy school environment once again! Last January, Tom Horne obtained approval from the State Board of Education for 8 schools to pilot a Model Health School Environment Policy beginning this fall. The model policy was created by the Arizona Department of Education in conjunction with a state coalition known as Arizona Action for Healthy Kids.

Some of the highlights of the model policy include offering healthier vending machine options, increase physical activity for all students, and evaluating the impact of such changes nutritionally and financially. Consistent health messages throughout the entire campus are maintained as well as faculty and staff being role models for a healthy environment.

The majority of the schools in the pilot study are elementary schools and all the schools are a closed campus. However, in order to have valid results from this pilot study, more investigation into secondary schools was necessary.

“Changing existing food consumption behavior is more challenging when students get older. Such is the case with students in the middle school and high school level. But we here at the Arizona Department of Education accept this necessary challenge” stated Tom Horne.

Tom Horne is pleased to announce the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently awarded the Arizona Department of Education a competitive grant through Team Nutrition to study the impact of the model policy at the secondary level. This study will be a continuation of the current pilot study to provide further data on the nutritional and financial impact of a healthy school environment. Timely, as Congress just passed a Reauthorization Bill for Child Nutrition Programs, which will require all schools to have an official wellness policy in place by July 2006.

This fall the Arizona Department of Education will be recruiting a total of 4 schools at the secondary education level (middle schools and high schools), particularly open campus settings, to pilot the Model Healthy School Environment Policy.